



## Department of Employment Dispute Resolution

### INFORMATION ABOUT GROUP MEDIATION

Group mediation is a voluntary process in which trained mediators assist members of a work group in an open and confidential forum to: (1) identify and discuss the issues that are affecting the group; (2) explore alternatives that may resolve the issues; and (3) reach agreement on the alternatives that would best resolve the issues.

The mediators have been trained in professional mediation practices by the Department of Employment Dispute Resolution or other approved training programs. The mediators have had no prior involvement with the concerns or issues facing the work unit and have no interest in a particular outcome. Whenever possible, the mediators will not be employees of the agency requesting mediation.

#### **The mediators:**

- meet with the work group, explain the process and answer questions
- interview each group member privately to obtain his or her perspective of the situation
- identify and list issues from the information shared during the interviews and present the list to the group for approval; the group may add or delete issues
- ask the group to prioritize the issues and decide the order of discussion by the group
- facilitate the discussion of the issues
- establish with the group a schedule of two or three meetings, 3-4 hours each, to discuss the issues
- help the parties define the issues involved
- encourage and assist the parties to have open and honest communication
- do not make judgments on who is right or wrong
- do not make decisions or impose solutions

#### **The parties:**

- are voluntary participants who want to discuss and resolve the issues
- must be willing to talk openly and honestly about their concerns and issues
- must be willing to generate alternatives to resolve the issues

#### **The agency:**

- assures no retaliation will occur
- agrees to keep the discussions in the mediation confidential
- commits to make the time needed for mediation available to the group

The mediators will ask each individual who participates in the group mediation to sign the “Consent To Mediate” form at the first group session and at the beginning of any subsequent sessions. If you have any questions or concerns, please address them at the pre-mediation information meeting or contact EDR’s Mediation Staff at the Department of Employment Dispute Resolution, 804-786-7994, or 1-888-23ADVICE (1-888-232-3842).